

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An apparatus for emptying containers ~~(2)~~ of fruit and vegetable produce ~~(3)~~, the apparatus comprising

a tipping device ~~(9)~~ for tipping at least one container ~~(2)~~ and movable between a first operating position to load said container ~~(2)~~, and a second operating position to unload the container ~~(2)~~; and

a conveying device ~~(8)~~ having an input station ~~(26)~~ for receiving the container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~, and an emptying station ~~(32)~~ for emptying the container ~~(2)~~, the conveying device ~~(8)~~ feeding the container ~~(2)~~ in a given first direction ~~(25)~~ and along a path ~~(T1)~~ extending between said input and emptying stations ~~(26, 32)~~; and

wherein said path ~~(T1)~~ is of a length ~~(L1)~~, measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~, at least equal to a length ~~(L2)~~ of said container ~~(2)~~, also measured parallel to said first

direction ~~(25)~~, and

wherein the emptying of the container commences after the container has been entirely unloaded from the tipping device and moved along said path.

~~such that emptying of the container (2) commences when the container (2) has been entirely unloaded from the tipping device (9) onto said conveying device (8).~~

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, and also comprising

an ejecting device ~~(34)~~ for transferring said container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~ to the conveying device ~~(8)~~ at a first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~; the conveying device ~~(8)~~ feeding the container ~~(2)~~ through said emptying station ~~(32)~~ at a second traveling speed ~~(V2)~~ lower than said first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 1,

wherein said path ~~(T1)~~ is of a length ~~(L1)~~, measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~, greater than a length ~~(L2)~~ of said container ~~(2)~~, also measured parallel to said first

direction ~~(25)~~.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 3,

wherein the conveying device ~~(8)~~ comprises first and second conveying means ~~(27, 28)~~ arranged in series along said path ~~(T1)~~; the first conveying means ~~(27)~~ feeding said container ~~(2)~~ along a portion of the path ~~(T1)~~ having a length, measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~, at least equal to a length ~~(L2)~~ of said container ~~(2)~~, also measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 4, and also comprising

an ejecting device ~~(34)~~ for transferring said container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~ to said first conveying means ~~(27)~~ at a first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 5, and also comprising actuating means for so controlling said second conveying means ~~(28)~~ as to feed the container ~~(2)~~

through said emptying station ~~(32)~~ at a second traveling speed ~~(V2)~~ lower than said first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~, and for so controlling said first conveying means ~~(27)~~ as to selectively feed the container ~~(2)~~ at said first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~ when transferring the container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~ to the first conveying means ~~(27)~~, and at said second traveling speed ~~(V2)~~ during at least part of the transfer of the container ~~(2)~~ from the first to the second conveying means ~~(27, 28)~~.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): ~~An~~ The apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, and also comprising

a further conveying device ~~(7)~~ for feeding said container ~~(2)~~ to said tipping device ~~(9)~~ in a second direction ~~(10)~~ sloping with respect to said first direction ~~(25)~~ by an angle ~~(A)~~ of other than 90°.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): An apparatus for emptying containers ~~(2)~~ of fruit and vegetable produce ~~(3)~~, the apparatus comprising

a tipping device ~~(9)~~ for tipping at least one container ~~(2)~~ and movable between a first operating position to load said

container ~~(2)~~, and a second operating position to unload the container ~~(2)~~;

a conveying device ~~(8)~~ having an input station ~~(26)~~ for receiving the container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~, and an emptying station ~~(32)~~ for emptying the container ~~(2)~~, the conveying device ~~(8)~~ feeding the container ~~(2)~~ in a given first direction ~~(25)~~ and along a path ~~(T1)~~ extending between said input and emptying stations ~~(26,32)~~ and having a length ~~(L1)~~, measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~, at least equal to a length ~~(L2)~~ of said container ~~(2)~~, also measured parallel to said first direction ~~(25)~~; and

an ejecting device ~~(34)~~ for transferring said container ~~(2)~~ from the tipping device ~~(9)~~ to the conveying device ~~(8)~~ at a first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~;

wherein the conveying device ~~(8)~~ feeds the container ~~(2)~~ through said emptying station ~~(32)~~ at a second traveling speed ~~(V2)~~ lower than said first traveling speed ~~(V1)~~, and

wherein the emptying of the container commences after the container has been entirely unloaded from the tipping device and moved along said path.